

# The Manning River Helmeted Turtle

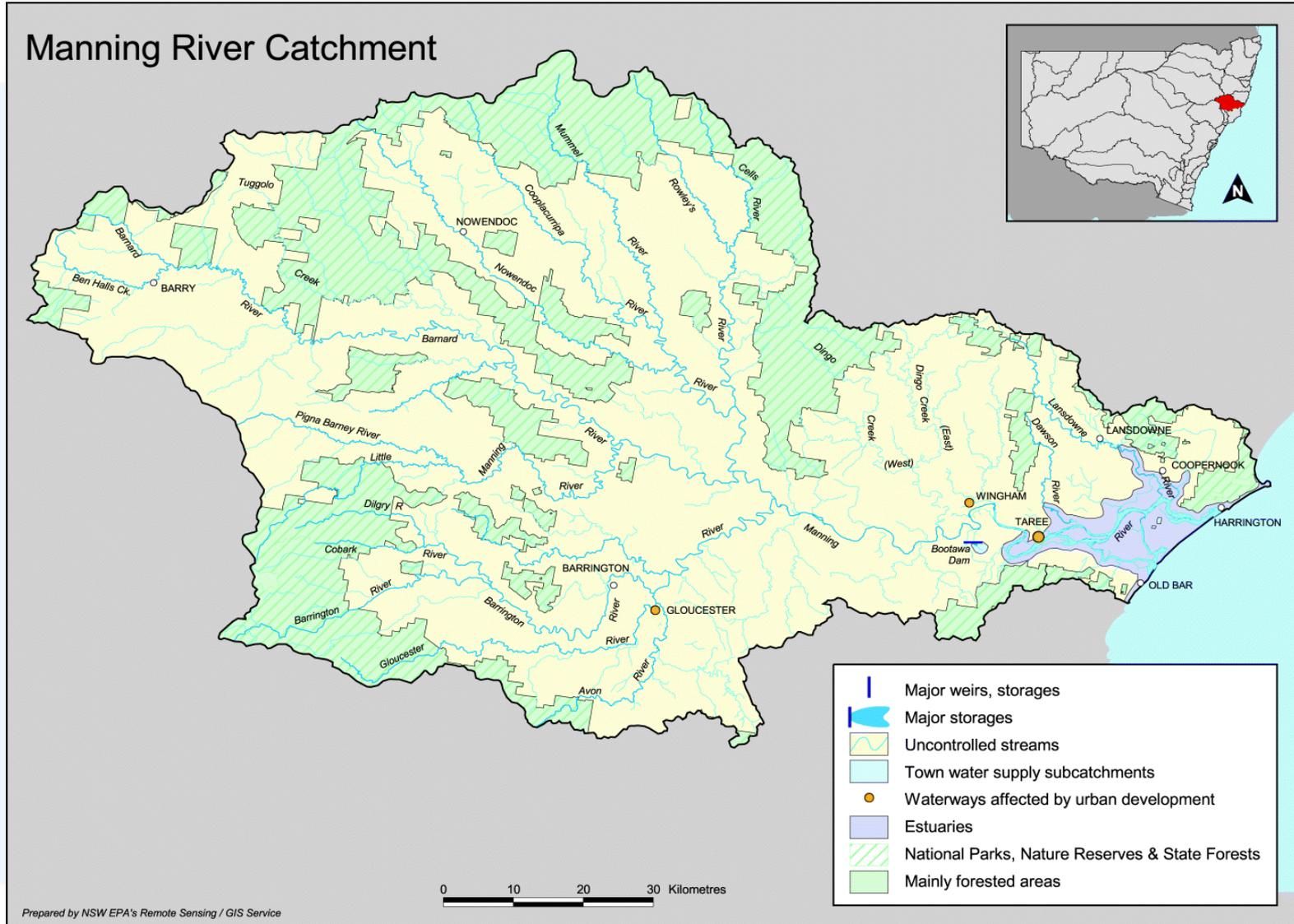


*Myuchelys purvisi*

# What does the Manning Turtle look like?



# Where does the Manning River Turtle live?



# Where does the Manning River Turtle live?



- Found only in the mid and upper reaches of the Manning River Catchment
- Likely lives in fast flowing, clear streams that are between 2 – 3 metres in depth.
- Lives in both rocky and sandy rivers, with boulders, logs and underwater caverns with some deep pools

# Searching for the Manning River Turtle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4cEs1-q-Rs>



# Some interesting facts

- ONE OF THE OLDEST LIVING TURTLES, THIS ANCIENT SPECIES HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR AROUND 55 MILLION YEARS
- They are omnivorous, predominantly feeding during the day time on large insects, fruit and water plants
- They help control aquatic vegetation, serve as scavengers and assist in maintaining healthy streams and rivers
- The age this species reaches is uncertain however closely related species can reach 30 – 40 years old



# More interesting facts

- They likely breed during February to April and lay up to 23 eggs in a single clutch per year.
- Nests are probably laid a few weeks after the first good rains in spring.
- Nests are thought to be about 30cm in diameter and are made in sandy gravel beds close to water, often on the inside of river bends
- During winter, they are probably inactive and hibernate in deep pools.
- Unlike other turtle species which will readily travel over land, it's likely that the Manning River Helmeted Turtle does not undertake these journeys and is restricted to water environments



# Threats to the Manning River Turtle

- Eggs can be eaten by foxes and pigs
- Changes in vegetation caused by livestock and weeds
- Increased sediment and nutrient levels
- Removal of in-stream habitat such as logs
- Illegal turtle and egg collection
- Inter-breeding and competition with the Murray River Turtle (*Emydura macquarii*)



**Murray River Turtle (*Emydura macquarii*)**

# More Threats

- Construction of dams and weirs
- Reduction in river levels and floods due to water and the effects of climate change
- Injury and death from fishing
- Rubbish (plastic bags, cigarette butts, fishing lines and hooks)
- Drowning in traps and nets



# Who is helping protect the turtle?



**MANNING RIVER TURTLE**  
Conservation Group



Meet Manny

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAHYZRM-ZrY>

Help us save the Manning River turtle

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZX\\_fYmJrJ44](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZX_fYmJrJ44)

# How can you help?

You can help the Manning River Helmeted Turtle.



1. **Protect** sand bank sites from livestock by fencing sensitive waterway areas. Outside of the nesting period (October to December), allow livestock to graze at very high intensity for very short periods of time to control weeds and allow native plant regeneration



2. **Remove** weeds along gravel banks where these species prefer to build nests



3. **Undertake coordinated control of feral animals** such as foxes and pigs



4. **Don't allow domestic dogs** to roam or dig up turtle nests



5. **Construct fencing around any known nest sites** to exclude foxes and pigs while allowing hatchlings to emerge safely – 90mm chicken wire can be used effectively



6. **Support local efforts to maintain and improve** natural waterways by joining a local community group such as Landcare



7. **Report any sightings** to the Office of Environment and Heritage and don't remove turtles from the river or disturb nests.



# Where do you get more information?

Office of Environment and Heritage NSW

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/native-animals/native-animal-facts/freshwater-turtles>

Local Land Services

[https://hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/1118568/Manning-River-Helmeted-Turtle-FINAL.pdf](https://hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1118568/Manning-River-Helmeted-Turtle-FINAL.pdf)

**Threatened Fauna**  
of the **Hunter & Mid Coast**



**Manning River Helmeted Turtle**  
*(Myuchelys purvizi)*

Found only in the mid and upper reaches of the Manning River, the biology of the Manning River Helmeted Turtle remains a mystery. Ongoing research suggests it's found in a limited number of locations and that juveniles are very low in numbers. Key threats include bees digging up nests and genetic interbreeding with the Marquardt turtle (*Myuchelys marquardt*). The age this species reaches is uncertain however closely related species can reach 30–40 years old.

One of the oldest living turtles, this ancient species has been in existence for around 55 million years

 **Local Land Services**

[www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au)  
We help secure the future of agriculture and the environment for NSW communities.